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### Items of Interest:

**Fight the Bite!** Don't let mosquitoes come and ruin your summer festivities. Keep insect repellent handy and get rid of mosquito breeding sites in the yard (areas of standing water, such as, bird baths, buckets of water, etc.). This summer, of particular concern, are those regions that have seen very heavy rain and flooding within the past few weeks. Just one mosquito bite can transmit West Nile Virus (WNV) or other diseases. To prevent illness from WNV and other mosquito-borne diseases, remember:

- Use Mosquito Repellent
- Eliminate Mosquito Breeding Sites
- Install or Repair Window and Door Screens
- Support Community-Based Mosquito Control Programs

For more information on West Nile Virus, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>

# Navy and Marine Corps Medical News

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## Officials Break Ground for Brain Injury Center of Excellence

By Fred W. Baker III, American Forces Press Service

**WASHINGTON** – On June 5, just inside the gates of the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md., officials ceremoniously turned the dirt at the site of what will become the military's premier institute for the study and care of psychological health and traumatic brain injuries.

Department of Defense (DoD) Secretary Robert M. Gates, alongside two other department secretaries, top military leaders, recovering wounded warriors and the namesakes of the Fisher House Foundation joined to break the ground for what will become the National Intrepid Center of Excellence for psychological health and traumatic

brain injury.

Construction of the \$70 million, 75,000-square-foot facility is being funded by the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund, a not-for-profit agency that raises funds to support military service members and families. The project mirrors the organization's funding and construction of a physical rehabilitation facility – The Center for the Intrepid -- built at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio last year.

This facility will serve as the clinical research and educational arm of the DoD Center of Excellence for psychological health and traumatic brain injury (TBI) -- a collaborative network of military,

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**PACIFIC OCEAN** - Cmdr. George Linville, stitches the hand of a patient with the aid of surgical technician Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class, Josue Schwarz aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) June 2. Linville is the sole surgeon aboard the ship and has performed more than 450 surgeries during his time aboard. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jennifer S. Kimball

## Continuing Promise Begins Medical Work in Peru

**By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Joshua Jarvis, USS Boxer Public Affairs**

**HUACHO, Peru** - Medical professionals embarked aboard USS Boxer (LHD 4) opened the doors of Peru's Salon Parochial medical site, June 10, to provide health care during the Peruvian phase of Continuing Promise (CP) 2008.

CP is a collaborative effort between U.S. military services to work with non-governmental organizations and partner nations to build strong partnerships which can be called upon in the event of a regional situation that requires cooperative solutions.

CP's doctors and medical professionals spent the day at the church site at Huacho, Peru, which was converted to a make-shift medical clinic for the visit. The crew worked with Peruvian medical professionals and interpreters to provide services.

"Working side-by-side with the host nation's medical professionals and sharing our medical knowledge is beneficial to both parties," said Cmdr. John King, director of the site.

"I think both sides gain a better appreciation of each other's strengths and understand how to make health care better both in Peru and the United States."

Patients lined the streets of Huacho and were waiting for treatment long before the team's arrival.

"We had an incredible welcome this morning with people clapping and cheering," King said.

Of the 1,000 patients at the site, a majority arrived for Continuing Promise optometrists. Treatments provided by the optometrists included routine eye exams and screenings for surgery in addition to providing prescription glasses to those in need.

"We have 800 people waiting in

line to be seen by an optometrist and we only have the capability and time to see 150 of those today," said Lt. Carmen Harmon, who coordinates patient flow at the site.

"As long as you are able to treat the first patient and the last patient with the same respect and expertise, then I think we have done our job," added King.

This was the first of three days at the site. Patients receiving other health care services in just the first day included more than 500 medical patients, 129 dental patients in addition to more than 1,000 prescribed medications provided by the pharmacy.

Boxer's mission exemplifies the U.S. maritime strategy which emphasizes deploying forces to build confidence and trust among nations through collective maritime security efforts that focus on common threats and mutual interests.

## Navy Entomology Team Visits Naples

**By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Michael Campbell, Fleet Public Affairs Center Detachment Europe**

**NAPLES, Italy** - The Navy's entomology training team visited Naval Hospital Naples, Italy, to provide refresher training on mosquito surveillance and identification to the base's preventative medicine team June 6.

"The training we provided strengthens an already strong preventative medicine program and giving them a refresher on things they learned during their original rate training," said Lt. Cmdr. Craig Stoops of the Navy Entomology Center for Excellence in Jacksonville, Fla.

The training not only included identification and surveillance, but also covered the use of traps to catch mosquitoes so they can be studied and identified. The team went around base with the preventative medicine team and placed traps throughout Naval Support Activity Naples and retrieved them the next day. Once all the traps were collected the specimens were removed and identified. This allows the team to know what mosquitoes are in the area and what steps they may need to take if the population gets too large.

"We collected traps and studied the mosquito larva. This will give us a good indication on where the ideal locations are," said Stoops. "Areas with standing water are considered 'hot spots' because they have the most amount of larva. These areas will be under closer surveillance."

During the teams two-day visit they identified six

species of mosquitoes. The primary species the team focused most of their training on was the Black and White Asian Tiger Mosquito. That particular species is common in the south-eastern portion of the United States, West Africa and southern Europe.

"The training we received will allow us to be more well-rounded corpsmen and allow us to provide more comprehensive services to the community here in Naples," said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class (SW/FMF) Antonio Rodriquez.

According to Stoops, the refresher training is just in time. With spring coming to an end, now is the best time to provide this training to preventative medicine teams before summer starts and the mosquito population increases. Stoops also said there are a few things everyone can do to control the population of mosquitoes. A few easy ways to control the pest population around the house are avoid standing water, such as excess water in flower pots, and also avoid puddles of water that may come from over-watering.

The team wrapped up training and the members returned to their respective commands June 6. According to Stoops, Naples' preventive medicine team will continue surveillance and monitoring the mosquito population throughout the summer and reduce the spread of viruses mosquitoes are known for spreading.

## Center continued...

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private and public health care and educational organizations linked to discover and promote best practices in the care of treatment of psychological health and TBI.

Gates said the need for such a facility has "never been more pressing or more important."

He said that the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have presented DoD with a unique mix of injuries, stress and strains on its military force.

"As in every conflict in America's history, many of our troops have returned bearing the scars of war – scars both seen and unseen," Gates said. "These invisible wounds are in many ways more pernicious, more grievous, because they are not readily apparent and have not always received the attention they should."

Gates said advancements in armor protection and battlefield medicine have led to more troops surviving what would have been otherwise fatal injuries. As result, though, there has been an increase in cases of TBI. The secretary conceded that although much about the condition still is not understood, \$150 million has been dedicated to the injury's prevention, diagnosis, treatment and recovery.

Also, the military has implemented better reporting mechanisms for those potentially affected, and DoD has launched department-wide efforts aimed at reducing the stigma attached with receiving mental health services in the military.

"That change in our culture represents our biggest challenge, and we know it will not happen overnight," Gates said.

Last month, DoD changed a longstanding question on its security questionnaire that asks if service members have received mental health counseling. Now, the question excludes counseling for combat-related stress and post-traumatic stress disorder.

"We hope that with this change, more will be willing to come forward and seek help," Gates said. "The main point is to do everything we can to ensure that the inevitable anxiety and stress from combat does not turn into something tragically worse."

Gates said that the new center symbolizes that the United States is keeping its contract with service members and their families to provide care should they be injured on the battlefield.

"After the wars themselves, I have no higher priority. And this superb new center will be a living reminder that America honors that contract and keeps faith with those who have sacrificed so much for all of us," Gates said.

The honorary chairman of the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund, Arnold Fisher, said that the contributions provided for the center were not charity, but a duty by Americans to care for its troops.

"This is not charity work. This is our duty to give back to this country, especially to the military," Fisher said. "We are no longer embarrassed to talk about mental health of our brave warriors. They deserve the best care, and this center will be the core of that effort."



**BETHESDA, Md.** - Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, fifth from right, digs into the ground during the ground breaking ceremony for the new Intrepid Center at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., June 5. *Department of Defense photo by Cherie Cullen*

The Fisher family's Fisher House Foundation raises money to build homes on military installations and at Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers across the United States. Families of those recovering at the hospitals are allowed to live in the homes for free. So far, the foundation has built 38 such homes. It plans to build more at the Bethesda campus, officials announced.

Once complete, the building will be turned over to the Defense Department for resourcing and management. The building is planned to be finished by November 2009.

The center is another example of the ever-expanding partnership between VA and DoD and other governmental agencies. So far, the two agencies have collaborated on revising policies and procedures that have been sticking points for service members transferring their care between the agencies. They've also joined to hire federal recovery coordinators who will oversee the management of the cases of the most severely injured. VA, DoD and the National Institutes of Health will collocate at the new center. The deputy director of the DoD Center of Excellence for psychological health and TBI is a VA employee.

"This Intrepid Center of Excellence will play an absolutely essential role in a unwavering commitment to continue that forward movement in getting it right in caring for those who have borne the battle," VA Secretary Dr. James B. Peake, a retired lieutenant general who served as Army surgeon general, said.

Marine Gen. James E. Cartwright, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the collaboration of the political administration, the military and the private sector shows long-term commitment toward service member care.

"We all are committed to making sure this is not just a short-term flash in the pan," Cartwright said. "We are committed to making this work, to addressing every problem that we can find and we can go after. This is absolutely essential. This is our duty."

The director of the DoD Center of Excellence for psychological health and TBI said the center will put in one place the partnerships that her office has been working to cultivate and will serve as a hub of global efforts to provide evaluation, diagnosis, and treat those suffering from PTSD, TBI and other psychological issues.



# USNS Mercy Mission Forms Partnerships, Provides Medical Help

By Navy Lt. Jennifer Cragg, Special to American Forces Press Service

**WASHINGTON** – The crew of the hospital ship USNS Mercy is forging relationships with host and partner nations while providing medical assistance during its Pacific Partnership 2008, tour of nations from the Philippines to East Timor.

Since deploying May 1, Mercy has visited three provinces in the Philippines and is expected to visit four other countries.

"The planning of this mission began many, many months ago, and it began by the requests of the host nations to partner with them to provide humanitarian assistance and civil assistance," Capt. James P. Rice, commanding officer of the medical treatment facility aboard Mercy, said in a teleconference with online journalists and bloggers.

Rice said many host-nation health care providers operate side by side with the Mercy staff.

"We have networked with the local health care system and the ministries of health to ensure after-care is provided to transition those patients into their health care sys-

tem," Rice added.

During the deployment, Mercy also will visit Vietnam, East Timor and Micronesia, offering medical assistance, repairing infrastructures and providing donated medical equipment for the host nation's use.

"This is a full-service hospital with everything you would expect to find in a hospital back home," Rice said. "We have lots of capability to include medicine, pediatrics and surgery, as well as the ability to put people in the host nation and provide medical and dental care ashore."

Since their stop in the Philippines, Mercy's crew has seen more than 14,000 patients through medical and dental civil action programs ashore. Aboard Mercy, some 200 surgeries have been performed and 400 patients have been seen.

Civil service master Capt. Robert T. Wiley, commanding officer of Mercy, said many miracles have taken place aboard Mercy, such as a surgery that allowed a young boy with a crippling injury to walk.

"Six years ago, he was injured

in a bomb explosion and his right leg was bent at the knee," Wiley said. "They did skin grafts and orthopedic surgery, and they got the leg to straighten."

He added that in physical therapy aboard Mercy, the 14-year old boy walked for the first time with crutches.

Other miracles are being performed, such as 53 cleft lip palate surgeries performed by Operation Smile, and the 22-pound tumor recently removed from a Filipina woman, Wiley said. "In 2006, aboard Mercy, we took out a larger tumor, which was close to 30 or 40 pounds," he added.

The crew of Mercy is thrilled to participate in the Pacific Partnership 2008 mission, the ship's civil service master said.

"People who go to medical school and decide to wear the uniform are so excited about being here," he said. "This is their mission; they are at the tip of the spear and are extremely excited about this."

Accompanying the Mercy crew

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## NMCB 17 Chaplain Receives Witherspoon Award

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kenneth W. Robinson, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 17 Public Affairs

**AL ASAD, Iraq** - A chaplain assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 17, in Iraq, was awarded the National Bible Association's Witherspoon Chaplain's Award on June 1.

Lt. Mark G. Dieter received the award from Capt. Robert A. Mclean, commodore of the 22nd Naval Construction Regiment, for his outstanding service to his country and his fellow Seabees.

"The Witherspoon Award is a reflection of serving a command that values chaplaincy in a combat environment. NMCB 17 maintains an active interest in religious and cultural history as a significant aspect of operational awareness. Support for using Scripture as a springboard to explore culture and history relevant to operations has been exceptional," said Dieter.

Dieter was nominated for the award for his creative delivery of lessons from the Old and New Testaments as well as the Qur'an during morning command staff meetings. He was recognized for his imaginative use of Scrip-

ture which flowed into diverse lessons on topics as wide ranging as Islamic, Jewish, and Christian history, cultural history, current intelligence reports concerning Al Qaeda in Iraq and Jayash al-Mahdi, and literary references. He is also a Ph.D. candidate in art history and religion at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Dieter was commissioned in November 1999 and attended Chaplains School at Newport, R.I. in January 2000, and was assigned to NMCB 17.

"The privilege of serving in the United States Navy continues to be one of my greatest life experiences. Deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom is an ongoing adventure filled with great people and awesome Seabee accomplishments. The inspiring Seabee tradition established in World War II is certainly alive and well in the 21st century," said Dieter.

"I enjoy working for him," says Religious Program Specialist 3rd Class Manuel Leal. "He is one of the best Chaplains I have had the honor to serve with. I'm glad to see he received the award. I think his commitment to his faith and to his fellow Seabees shows in his character, even under trying times."

## MCPON Addresses San Diego HMs at 110th Birthday Ball

**By Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist (SW/AW) Bill Houlihan, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Public Affairs**

**SAN DIEGO** - Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) (SW/FMF) Joe R. Campa Jr. left the Hospital Corps to become a command master chief in 1999. But, as he told an audience of Hospital Corpsmen in San Diego June 14 at the 110th Hospital Corpsman (HM) Birthday Ball, the lessons he learned early in his career have stayed with him to this day.

"I truly believe that the opportunities I've been given are due in large part to the men and women in Navy Medicine who developed me as a Sailor and corpsman," said Campa. "I'll always be grateful for that."

"While the time I spent serving our Navy as a hospital corpsman resides in the past, it remains very much who I am today."

Campa noted the deep respect he has today for the Navy's heritage and history was formed at an early stage in his career. He explained that stories passed down to him of courage on the battlefield and at sea, helped form his character.

He mentioned the heroism of

Pharmacist's Mate 2nd Class Frank Welte, who died at Belleau Wood August 6, 1918. Welte, in the heat of battle, saved the lives of scores of Marines then died only after he was sure he'd done all he could.

"He looked his patient in the eye, handed him the medical notes he made on the injured and asked him to make sure they got back to the battalion aid station," Campa recounted.

"Once the Marine acknowledged the request, Welte quietly passed away. He spent his last dying breath doing his job the only way he knew how: with courage and unwavering commitment to his Marines."

Campa also mentioned the sense of honor he felt two months ago when he met Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Joshua Chiarini, a Fleet Marine Force corpsman awarded the Silver Star for his actions in Ramadi, Iraq in 2006. Campa explained that when he spoke with Chiarini, who is credited with saving several Marines' lives following an improvised explosive device attack and subsequent gun battle, the Corpsman downplayed it and said he was "simply doing his job."

Campa noted that Chiarini's ac-



**SAN DIEGO** - Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Joe R. Campa Jr. gives his remarks during the 110th Hospital Corpsman Birthday Ball in San Diego June 14. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jennifer A. Villalovos

tions were representative of the entire community.

"The remarkable legacy we celebrate tonight is not confined to the battle field. It can also be found in the quiet and dignified way that you carry out your duties around the globe providing care to the sick and injured. Wherever our Sailors and Marines are serving you'll find a corpsman answering that special call to duty that we honor here tonight," said Campa.

## USNS Mercy continued...

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are doctors and dentists from Japan, Canada, and Australia, but as the deployment continues, they will be welcoming medical practitioners

from Chili, Portugal, Singapore and Indonesia. Non-governmental organizations, such as Project HOPE also are accompanying the crew of Mercy.

"This is a great value to work together on a humanitarian basis, ... to prepare us to work together in a disaster situation where we already know each other and will be comfortable working together," Rice said.

Rice explained other capabilities Mercy also brings to the countries it visits.

"We have brought preventive medicine and environmental health providers on board to help with sanitation inspections and other

public health preventative medicine programs," Rice said.

Mercy also has veterinarians aboard, performing important work on animals, which are a defining component of some host nations' economic stability, he added.

Construction battalion engineers round out the crew. They are actively engaged in a variety of projects ranging from repairing roofs and schools to replacing windows.

"All this will have an impact on their educational ability. By having a nice structure that will allow them to educate their children, there will be a long-term benefit," Rice said.



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